

# Reading Toolkit: Grade 6 Objective 2.A.5.a

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 5. Analyze purposeful use of language

Objective a. Analyze specific words or phrases that contribute to the meaning of a text

Assessment Limits:

Significant words and phrases with a specific effect on meaning

Significant words and phrases with a specific effect on meaning

Figurative language

Figurative language

Idioms

Idioms

Connotations of grade-appropriate words

Connotations of grade-appropriate words

Technical or content vocabulary

Technical or content vocabulary

Denotations of above-grade-level words in context

Denotations of above-grade-level words in context

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## Lesson Seeds

### Reading Grade 6 Objective 2.A.5.a

#### Activities

Prior to students reading an informational passage, the teacher will preview the text and select several words that are essential to the understanding of the text. Before students begin reading, the teacher will share these words in context with the class. Students will use context clues to suggest a meaning for each word. Students will be instructed to read the text with the purpose of determining whether or not the meaning suggestions proved valid or needed to be adjusted. After reading is complete teacher and students will review the words, determine a correct meaning for each, and discuss how knowing the meanings of those words is essential to understanding that informational passage.

Prior to reading an informational text, with teacher direction students will preview the text with the purpose of identifying its genre and predicting the type of language that will be used in that type of genre. Suggestions for type of language may include formal, informal, persuasive, descriptive etc...As students read they should be aware of language and circle or use post-its to identify words that indicate a specific style. Once reading is complete, assign each student a partner, have them review their marked texts, and determine the type of language used. Selected partners should share their findings with the class telling the style of the language and supporting that assertion with text support.

The teacher will provide students with a series of advertisements. With teacher direction students will identify words within the advertisement that are intended to persuade a reader. Next, students will identify the specific purpose of the ad. A sample student response should begin..."This advertisement persuades me to believe...." Finally students will analyze the words they have already identified as persuasive. In a teacher-directed discussion, students will determine the finer points and subtleties of each persuasive word looking at the associations the words evoke and their layers of meaning. For example, if a product or idea were to be associated with the word "springtime" in an advertisement, the word could be associated with ideas of rebirth, newness, change, etc...

The teacher will instruct students to read an informational passage. After the initial reading is complete, the teacher will select one sentence from the text which contains a word essential to the understanding of the text. Students will be asked to brainstorm other words that might replace the essential word. After a series of words has been suggested, the teacher and student will determine how the different word alters the meaning of the passage. A final determination will be made with the original word and its effect on the meaning of the passage.

## Clarification

### Reading Grade 6 Indicator 2.A.5

To show proficiency of the skills stated in this indicator, a reader will be able to identify, explain, and analyze an **author's use of language**, specific words or phrases that contribute to the meaning of a text or to the creation of an author's style. Author's style is the way an author uses language to express his/her thoughts. This may include word choice and figurative language. These words are purposeful and give clues to readers about the meaning and tone of a text or portion of a text. Used in conjunction with other text elements, the author's use of language assists readers in constructing meaning.

**To identify, explain and analyze specific words or phrases**, a reader must distinguish among the different types of word choices in texts or portions of texts. Word choice can make a point, set a tone, or reveal an author's style. By recognizing the different types of word choices, clarifying their purpose, and examining their implications, readers are better able to construct meaning from text.

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| • Significant Words               | words that are necessary to a reader's understanding of a text   |
| • Figurative Language             | language that relays a meaning beyond a literal meaning  |
|                                   | Simile: stated comparison of two things that have some quality in common using the words like or as  |
|                                   | Metaphor: stated comparison of two things that have some quality in common <u>not</u> using the words like or as   |
|                                   | Personification: stating that an inanimate object has lifelike characteristics   |
| • Idiom                           | phrase/expressions whose meaning cannot be understood from the literal meaning of the words in it Hold your tongue is an English idiom meaning keep quiet. |
| • Colloquialism                   | familiar, informal, everyday talk Movies is an informal term for the more formal term cinema.  |
| • Connotation                     | idea or feeling associated with a word in addition to its literal meaning  |
| • Technical or Content Vocabulary | words that are specific to an area of study  |
| • Denotation                      | literal, dictionary meaning of a word  |
| • Discernible Word Style          | words associated with persuasive, formal, or informal writing  |

**To identify, explain, and analyze language that creates tone** a reader must first know that tone expresses the author's attitude toward his or her subject. The language, punctuation, and details a writer chooses help create the tone which could be serious, playful, angry,

sad, etc... In addition to specific word choices the inclusion of specific punctuation helps relay an author's attitude. A reader identifies words or phrases in a text that, in conjunction with the content of the text, signal the author's attitude toward the subject of that text. Once those words have been identified, a reader can tell how those words create a specific tone. Ultimately a reader can examine the specific words an author uses to create a specific tone. A critical reader examines word choice, punctuation, and content to determine if a particular tone is appropriate to a subject. For example, in an editorial that addresses the aftermath of a natural disaster, the tone would be serious or thoughtful.

To identify, explain, and analyze the effects of repetition in a text, a reader becomes aware of the repeated use of words and phrases in a text. A critical reader notes the portion of a text where repetition occurs and determines why an author draws attention to and what is important about that portion of text. An author may slightly change the repeated words and phrases to draw continued emphasis to the ideas in that portion of text. Finally, a critical reader uses repetition or altered repetition to focus on those ideas that help a reader construct meaning of an entire text.

## Sample Item #1 Brief Constructed Response (BCR) Item with Annotated Student Responses

### Question

Read the story 'Saints and Strangers on the Ship of Hope' and answer the following question.

Compare the way the Saints and Strangers describe the events of the voyage to the way the author describes them. In your response, use information from the article that supports your answer. Write your answer on your answer document.

### Annotated Student Responses

One similarity between the way the saints and strangers described the events is that they both say it is bad experience and it was uncomfortable. One difference is that the saints and strangers talk about

Annotation: The reader focuses on the similarities between the Saints and Strangers rather than comparing the views of these groups with the views of the author. The reader explains both groups say "it is bad experience and it was uncomfortable." To improve this response the reader could explain why it was a bad experience and how it was uncomfortable and continue to describe the author's view of the voyage.

The ways the Saints  
 and the Strangers describe  
 the events are 1. The  
 ship was called the Mayflower.  
 2. The trip took 65 days to  
 complete. 3. The meat and  
 biscuits had bugs in them but  
 when they made the soup  
 the bugs floated to the top  
 so they could skim the bugs off  
 the surface.

Annotation: The reader responds with "the ways the Saints and the Strangers describe the events" and then continues to state facts from the article, the name of the ship, the length of the voyage, and the condition of the food. To improve this response the reader could add to the author's descriptions with the condition of the water and the living conditions on board ship. The passengers' descriptions could be addressed with ideas from William Bradford, Robert Cushman, and other unnamed passengers.

They are talking and saying  
the same thing but in  
different words. Also you  
know when saint and  
the other person is talk-  
ing they have " " on  
them.

Annotation: The reader compares the views of the passengers and the author by stating they are "saying the same thing but in different words." The reader identifies how a reader can tell when the Saints and Strangers were speaking through the use of quotation marks. To improve this response, the reader explains what the "different words" described with the examples of the danger of storms and the incident of the man who fell overboard.

## Handouts

## Saints and Strangers on the Ship of Hope

By Pam Cannon

The two sturdy ships sat moored to the dock, water lapping against their hulls. John Alden, the barrel maker hired for the trip, checked the barrels of salted beef, fish, biscuits, peas, cheese, and dried fruit as they were stored in the hold. Master William Brewster, magnificent in his purple coat, loaded the last of his books.

<sup>2</sup>Small knots of people huddled on the dock, exchanging tearful good—byes. When the passengers were safely on board, the Mayflower and her smaller companion, the Speedwell, creaked toward the open sea. The Pilgrims' journey to the new world had begun.

Two separate groups dared to risk the trip to America. Only about fifty Pilgrims, or Saints, as they called themselves, sought religious freedom. They were led by William Bradford. The rest, like John Alden, were seeking fortune and adventure. The Saints called those passengers the Strangers. They nicknamed the Mayflower the Ship of Hope.

In the weeks before they set sail, the groups argued over money, supplies, and leadership. Thomas Weston, a London businessman who had loaned the Saints money, became disgusted with the fighting and refused to give them more to pay for additional supplies. "We are forced to sell...provisions," one Saint wrote.

What could they do without? The food had to last a year because it would take that long to grow crops. But they could sacrifice the butter, so they sold two tons of it to pay for the remaining supplies.

This was just the beginning of the groups' troubles. After only three days at sea, the Speedwell sprung dangerous leaks, and both ships turned back. "If we had stayed at sea three or four hours more," wrote Robert Cushman, one of the Saints, "she would have sunk right down."

<sup>7</sup>A week of precious good weather was wasted while the ship was repaired in England, then they set out once again. But three weeks into the trip, the Speedwell started leaking again.

<sup>8</sup>The two ships limped back to Plymouth, England, and the voyagers now made an agonizing decision: They would leave the Speedwell and twenty of her passengers behind. All of her supplies and her remaining twenty passengers boarded the Mayflower, already crowded with more than eighty passengers, sailors, and crew.

The Mayflower finally left England's shores for the last time. "September 6. These troubles being blown over and all being compact together in one ship, they put to sea again with a prosperous wind," wrote William Bradford in his journal.

Life on board the ninety—foot Mayflower was loud and uncomfortable. There was no privacy, and most people slept side by side anywhere they could find a space. The lack of water for washing forced everyone to wear the same clothes day and night, and everyone reeked of sweat, dirt, and seawater. Buckets served as the only toilet seats.

But the people managed. In calm weather, they could walk in the fresh air. Children played on the water—slick deck.



No one looked forward to mealtime. The passengers choked down the same food day after day—salted beef or fish and biscuits as hard as dog biscuits. After a few weeks, most of the food was crawling with maggots, weevils, and other insects. The water was even worse—it stunk and had a slimy, oily feel. After a while it settled and became drinkable, but most passengers drank beer instead. They believed that water was unhealthy.

A hot meal was a rare treat. Since fire was a constant danger on a rolling, moving ship, only one small box filled with sand was available for building a cooking fire. Each family took turns using the box, and the women usually made a salt—beef stew called loblolly. Most people liked the soup because they were able to soften their biscuits in it! Also, any insects in the biscuits and the beef rose to the top of the soup and could be easily skimmed off.

Each day the captain, Master Jones, worriedly watched for storms. The delays had forced the group to travel during the Atlantic storm season. The slow pace of the ship made the chances of hitting a storm much greater. After several weeks of calm sailing, the cold Arctic storms finally hit. Below decks, passengers huddled in the stinking darkness as waves pounded the ship.

"Even the sailors prayed. Many of us want to turn back," a passenger later wrote. The Mayflower's wooden hull creaked and groaned as the angry ocean slammed into it. For days the passengers believed that every roll and toss meant their deaths.

Then, amid, their prayers and screams of fright, a deafening crack split the air. The main beam had broken and crashed into the deck above, and water cascaded into the hull. The men rushed to the deck and tried to push the enormous timber back into place. It was impossible.

Then the captain remembered the "great iron screw" the passengers had brought to raise houses in the new world. Sailors heaved the screw up and braced it under the beam. It held! Everyone was safe—for now.

Week after week, the captain and his crew fought the ocean as the passengers became sick and restless below. One Stranger, John Howland, managed to get to the deck and was immediately washed into the sea.

But luck was with John. "He caught hold of the topsail halyards which hung overboard and...held his hold (though he was sundry fathoms underwater) till he was hauled up," William Bradford wrote. "His life was saved." A few days later, the seas calmed.

One dark morning everyone was awakened by a sound many thought they'd never hear: a sailor shouting "Land ho!" Everyone rushed to get their first glimpse of land in sixty—five days."

They fell upon their knees and blessed the God of Heaven, "William Bradford wrote. It was November 11, 1620, and the Saints and Strangers had found their new home.

## Rubric - Brief Constructed Response (BCR)

### Score 3

The response demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the text.

- Addresses the demands of the question
- Effectively uses text-relevant<sup>1</sup> information to clarify or extend understanding

### Score 2

The response demonstrates a general understanding of the text.

- Partially addresses the demands of the question
- Uses text-relevant<sup>1</sup> information to show understanding

### Score 1

The response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the text.

- Minimally addresses the demands of the question
- Uses minimal information to show some understanding of the text in relation to the question

### Score 0

The response is completely incorrect, irrelevant to the question, or missing.<sup>2</sup>

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Text-relevant: This information may or may not be an exact copy (quote) of the text but is clearly related to the text and often shows an analysis and/or interpretation of important ideas. Students may incorporate information to show connections to relevant prior experience as appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> An exact copy (quote) or paraphrase of the question that provides no new relevant information will receive a score of "0".

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